

MEMORANDUM

September 12, 2017

TO: Mark Smith
Chief Student Support Officer

FROM: Carla Stevens
Assistant Superintendent, Research and Accountability

SUBJECT: **PARENT ENGAGEMENT REPRESENTATIVES (PERS), 2016–2017**

The Houston Independent School District's (HISD) Family and Community Empowerment (FACE) Department implements strategies that are designed to improve communication between parents and the school community, enhance parent/teacher conference participation, increase parent awareness of district and community programs and resources; and ultimately, increase student achievement and attendance. Over the past two years, FACE has helped schools build their capacity to reach parents through its Parent Engagement Representatives (PERs) program. The PERs program was funded by the Title I Parent Involvement grant.

Key findings include:

- During the 2016–2017 academic year, PERs documented 3,669 hours conducting parent involvement activities, which reflected a substantial increase in documented time from the 2015–2016 academic year of 1,468 hours.
- There were statistically significant increases in the mean scale scores on the English reading STAAR for a paired sample of PERs students who were administered the test as fourth, fifth, seventh, and eighth graders in 2017 and tested at the preceding grade level in 2016.
- There were statistically significant increases in the mean scale scores on the English math STAAR for a paired sample of PERs students who were administered the test as fourth, fifth, seventh, and eighth graders in 2017 and tested at the preceding grade level in 2016.
- School attendance analyses showed that the mean number of days in attendance for students at PERs schools remained stable from 2015–2016 to 2016–2017 (158). While there was a slight increase in the mean number of excused (2 vs. 3) absences, there was also a slight increase in the mean number of unexcused (5 vs. 6) and total absences (7 vs. 9) for students at PERs schools over this time period.

Further distribution of this report is at your discretion. Should you have any questions, please contact me at 713-556-6700.

Attachment

CJS

cc: Grenita Lathan
Michelle Burke
Ashley Pleasant



RESEARCH

Educational Program Report

PARENT ENGAGEMENT
REPRESENTATIVES (PERS), 2016-2017



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Houston Independent School District
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4400 West 18th Street Houston, Texas 77092-8501

www.HoustonISD.org

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PARENT ENGAGEMENT REPRESENTATIVES (PERs) 2016–2017

Executive Summary

Parent, school, and community engagement is widely established as a collaborative strategy to improve the school experience and educational outcomes for children and youth (Epstein & Sanders, 2006; Weiss, Lopez, & Rosenberg, 2011; Barr & Saltmarsh, 2014). The Houston Independent School District's (HISD) Family and Community Empowerment (FACE) Department supports positive educational outcomes for students by encouraging parents to become advocates in their children's education. Strategies used by Parent Engagement Representatives (PERs) are consistent with HISD's *Declaration of Beliefs and Vision* that parents are valued partners in the educational process, serving as the child's teacher in the home. HISD maintains that all school and district activities will give proper consideration to the involvement of parents.

FACE helped schools build their capacity to reach parents through its Parent Engagement Representatives (PERs) program. The PERs program was funded by the Title I Parent Involvement grant. The PERs program was aligned to the *Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family-School Partnerships* (**Appendix A**, p. 18). This home-to-school model incorporates activities that are designed to improved communication between parents and the school community, enhance parent/teacher conference participation, increase parent awareness of district and community programs and resources; and ultimately, student achievement and attendance (**Figures 1, 2, and 3**).

The PERs program was initiated during the

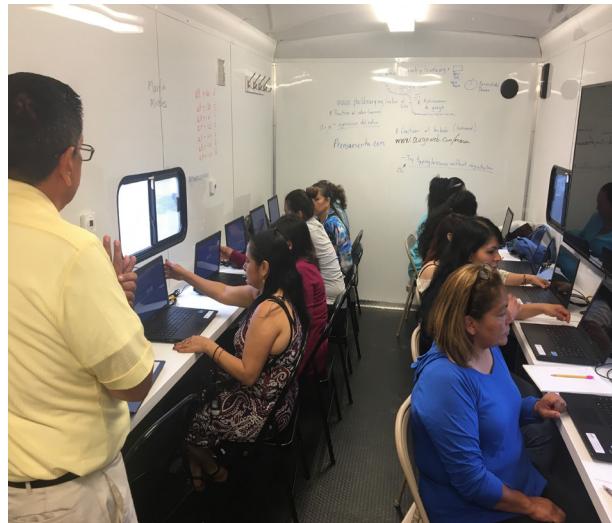


Figure 1. Sharpstown HS parents in computer class



Figure 2. Bonham ES student/parent Home Depot workshop



Figure 3. Bonham ES students display Home Depot project

2015–2016 academic year at 20 HISD campuses that consistently struggled with low student academic achievement. For the current academic year, 18 PERs were assigned to campuses across the district to continue the work of building stronger school communities. The 2016–2017 PERS campuses can be found in **Appendix B** (p. 19).

Throughout the school year, PERs actively developed and supported parent and community organizations through various activities, including increasing volunteerism at campuses, leading staff development and parent workshops, supporting parent organizations within campuses, scheduling and facilitating speakers at Parent Centers and other events, and attending community events. Other PERs-related activities, by Title 1 category, are presented in **Appendix C** (pp. 20–23).

Professional development attended by PERs during the 2016–2017 academic year helped to support parent engagement efforts in schools. Trainings included “Family Friendly Schools” and “More Practical Strategies for Enhancing Parent Engagement.” Consistent documentation of PERs activities was emphasized in trainings. **Appendix D** (pp. 24–25) provides examples of PERs training agendas.

To explore the impact of PERs involvement on student performance, this evaluation addressed the following research questions:

- What were the demographic characteristics of students at PERs schools during the 2016–2017 academic year?
- What extent were parent involvement activities offered at PERs schools?
- What was the impact of PERS on student achievement?
- What were attendance outcomes for students at PERs schools?

There are several limitations to this study. Student achievement and attendance outcomes were used as proxies to measure the impact of PERs’ involvement at targeted schools. An assumption was that engaging parents in activities provided them with skills needed to assist their child in learning at home. Another limitation was that schools may have differed in how they utilized PERs services, considering the differences in parent and student demographic characteristics and needs. Qualitative analyses that explored which parents were directly or indirectly exposed to PERs activities were not conducted in this evaluation. This posed a limitation for measuring the full impact of PERs on the development of parent knowledge and skills that support student learning. Another limitation was related to documentation of the time spent conducting PERs activities. However, consistent training on how to log parent-related contacts and regular monitoring of the logged contacts by FACE administrative staff helped to improve the reliability of the data. Finally, schools may have received resources based on the federal and state accountability status; thus, affecting their reliable use as comparison schools.

Highlights

- PERs impacted 14,994 students at 18 Title I HISD elementary, middle, and high schools during the 2016–2017 academic year. The demographic characteristics of students at PERs schools varied. Specifically, 62 to 99% of the students at targeted schools were economically disadvantaged and between 54 to 93% of the students were at risk of dropping out of school. In addition, 6 to 85% of the students at PERs schools were identified as limited English proficient (LEP), 4 to 19% in special education programs, and 1 to 29% were gifted/talented.
- During the 2016–2017 academic year, PERs documented 3,669 hours conducting parent involvement activities, which reflected a substantial increase in documented time from the 2015–2016 academic year of 1,468 hours.

- PERs spent 34% of their time during fall and 37% of their time during spring conducting administrative activities, such as meeting with principals and staff to discuss planning events. Direct services, such as parent education/training and parent literacy events, seemed to be the primary focus for PERs.
- Relative to all PERs, the Bonham Elementary School PER spent the most time engaged in parent involvement activities during the 2016–2017 academic year (8,350 minutes in fall and 31,355 minutes in spring). This was followed by the Key Middle School PER in the fall (4,455 minutes) and the Benavidez Elementary School PER in the spring (20,962 minutes).
- Paired t-test analyses revealed increases in the mean scale scores on the English reading STAAR for PERs students who were administered the test as fourth graders in 2017 and tested at the third grade-level in 2016. In addition, there were increases in the scores of fifth, seventh, and eighth grade-students who were administered the test in 2017 and also tested at the preceding grade level in 2016. The positive differences in scores were highly statistically significant at $p < .0001$.
- Effect size analyses based on the 2016 (pre-test) and the 2017 (post-test) reading STAAR revealed a medium program effect as students progressed from third to fourth grade and a large program effect as students progressed from sixth to seventh grade.
- There were increases in the mean scale scores on the English math STAAR for the paired samples of PERs students who were administered the test as fourth graders in 2017 and tested at the third grade-level in 2016. There were also increases in the scores of fifth, seventh, and eighth grade-students who were administered the test in 2017 and also tested at the preceding grade level in 2016. The positive differences in scores were highly statistically significant at $p < .0001$.
- Effect size analyses based on the 2016 (pre-test) and the 2017 (post-test) math STAAR revealed medium to large program effects as students progressed from third to fourth grade and from fourth to fifth grades. There was a medium program effect as students progressed from sixth to seventh grade.
- The PERs-student group, who were first-time testers, attained a lower mean scale score than the district first-time testers on the 2017 English I EOC (3552 vs. 3905) and the 2017 Algebra I EOC (3829 vs. 4006) exams.
- School attendance analyses showed that the mean number of days in attendance for students at PERs schools remained stable from 2015–2016 to 2016–2017 (158). While there was an increase in the mean number of excused (2 vs. 3) absences, there was also an increase in the mean number of unexcused (5 vs. 6) and total absences (7 vs. 9) for students at PERs schools from 2015–2016 to 2016–2017.

Recommendations

- Differences in the extent that PERs conducted activities at targeted schools varied greatly. However, positive program effects for students at some grade levels were evident on reading and math STAAR relative to students from 2015–2016 to 2016–2017. Consistently implementing activities that are aligned with the *Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family-School Partnerships* (SEDL, 2014) and that support quality parent engagement at schools seems warranted based on the data. This strategy may help to ensure that achievement and positive student outcomes are consistently realized for all students.

Introduction

Parent Engagement Representatives (PERs) have been found to be an effective strategy to improve communication and build strong “home-school” partnerships between parents and school staff, considering its alignment with evidence-based strategies (Epstein & Sanders, 2006). During the 2016–2017 academic year, the HISD Family and Community Empowerment Department (FACE) employed 18 part-time PERs to help schools build such capacity.

The PERs Model

PERs responsibilities were categorized into eight primary functions: (1) *Administrative* activities, (2) *Professional Development* (3) *Parent Education/Training Events* (4) *Parent Literacy Events*, (5) *Family Literacy Events*, (6) *Planning*, (7) *Volunteer*, and (8) *School Climate Improvement*. Specific tasks that comprised each function were determined by FACE staff based on criteria established by the Title I Parent Involvement grant. The specific activities within each category can be found in Appendix C (p. 20). Each PER was assigned to assist one school, working 30 hours per week. The anticipated outcomes for their work included the following:

- Higher achievement outcomes for students in language arts and mathematics,
- Higher student attendance,
- Improved parent-teacher communication and collaboration,
- Increased family skills, knowledge, and confidence to support student learning at home,
- Enhanced student attitude and behavior,
- Improved school climate,
- More robust parent and family participation in support of their students and improved results on the annual Title I Part A Parent Involvement report, and
- Improved school self-assessment results on the Parent and Community Engagement section of the annual House Bill 5 Campus Self-Assessment.

Table 1 provides strategies used by PERs to engage parents in order to improve student and parent outcomes. In addition, depictions of various PERs activities are presented in this report. “For the Love of Reading” Literacy Night was held at Cullen Middle School in February 2017. This event promoted literacy at home and school by emphasizing home-shared reading between parents and children. The event introduced the school community to the new library and provided parents with information on membership

Table 1: PERs’ strategies to improve student and parent outcomes

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| “...At our PTO meetings, we always have a presentation topic, we try to get outside speakers, but if we can’t locate a presenter, we do a presentation ourselves. We did a series of presentations with a dental clinic to go to every classroom and give presentations about dental health... We gave out goodie bags and we did this for a couple of weeks to hit every class.” (Bonham ES PER) |
| “...Consistency helped the parents.” (Benavidez PER) |
| “...I got with the attendance clerk and I started making attendance phone calls and the attendance clerk told me that this has skyrocketed attendance ...” (Edison MS PER) |
| “...I do attendance calls... I can see I am making a difference. I am in charge of Saturday tutorials...When there are low numbers on Saturday, I call the parent on Monday, “Hey, your child was supposed to be here on Saturday, was there a problem”. Attendance has improved, for both every day in school and for Saturday tutorials...” (Lewis PER) |
| “...You have to ask yourself, what more can be offered...” (Bonham ES PER) |
| “...We had a table in which parents could ask a school leader specific questions about discipline, grading, any other problems that a student is having...” (Cullen MS PER) |
| “...We had a [very] successful Literacy Night...The teachers were really involved...We distributed flyers...” (Thompson ES PER) |



Figure 4a: Cullen Middle School Literacy Night



Figure 4b: Cullen Middle School Literacy Night

to the library. The event also shared information on the HISD partnership with the Houston Public Library, provided training on the Houston Public Library System, and illustrated how reading is essential in all academic areas (**Figures 4a** and **4b**).

The Benavidez PER helped with a “Family Movie Night/PTO” event, that also functioned as a fundraiser for the school (**Figure 5**). The Tinsley PER collaborated with the school to help students and parents with the “Girls Day” event to build family relationships. The Tinsley PER also assisted the school with “Middle School Night” to inform students and parents about future educational options in HISD (**Figure 6**). The PER at Black Middle School helped coordinate the “Literacy” event that exposed students to literary works and provided an opportunity for students to perform for their parents (**Figure 7**).

Review of Literature

There is broad consensus that parent involvement in schools improves the parent-child relationship and improves children’s academic success (see Henderson’s [1987] meta-analysis; Epstein, 2006). Meta-



Figure 5: Benavidez ES parents and students watching a movie



Figure 6: Tinsley ES Middle School Night



Figure 7: Black MS Literacy Event

analyses conducted by Jeunes (2005) associated parental involvement with higher student achievement outcomes. Henderson and Mapp (2002) observed that when parents are involved, their children had higher grades, test scores, attended school on a regular basis, were more motivated, had higher levels of self-esteem, lower rates of suspension, and showed improved behavior at home and school (as cited in Jeunes, 2005). Hilado, Kallmeyn, and Phillips (2013) highlighted research on the positive relationship between parental involvement, children's brain development, and school readiness. The research showed that the earlier in the child's education experience parent engagement begins, the more powerful the effects (Kagitcibasi, Sunar, & Bekman, 2001).

The Southwest Educational Development Laboratory's (2014) *Dual-Capacity Building Framework for Family-School Partnerships* supports the cultivation and sustainability of positive relationships between schools and families (see Appendix A). The framework emphasizes intensive efforts on "developing adult capacity, whether through pre- and in-service professional development for educators; academies, workshops, seminars, and workplace trainings for families; or as an integrated part of parent-teacher partnership activities" (p.1). District and school policies and programs should build (1) capabilities (human capital, skills, and knowledge); (2) connections (important relationships, networks, social capital); (3) confidence (self-efficacy); and (4) cognition (assumptions, beliefs, and worldview) to enhance student achievement and student learning. The significance of parent involvement in education was further emphasized through the U.S. Department of Education's *Family Engagement in Education Act of 2011* (Civic Impulse, 2017). The Act highlighted that positive benefits are maximized through effective family engagement that is continuous across the lives of children, youth, families when supported by schools (*Family Engagement in Education Act of 2011*, Section 3, Civic Impulse, 2017).

Based on the theory of overlapping spheres, Epstein & Sanders (2006) acknowledged six types of activities that foster productive parental involvement, including "parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision-making, and collaborating with the community" (Epstein & Sanders, 2006, p. 87). While these activities can be defined by numerous practices, theoretically, "students learn more and succeed at higher levels when home, school, and community work together to support students' learning and development" (Epstein & Sander, 2006, p. 87). Meta-analyses on parental involvement programs for urban students found that school leaders and teachers can strengthen programs by offering advice to parents on vital components of voluntary expressions, such as setting high expectations and adopting parenting styles that are associated with positive student outcomes, considering that many parents do not realize how powerful and effective these factors are in promoting positive student outcomes (Jeunes, 2013). Moreover, parents should be encouraged to take an active role in activities, such as checking homework and sharing reading activities, "given that school-based guidance appears to increase the efficacy of those particular behaviors" (p. 1). The research has also shown that parents are more likely to be engaged in schools where the principal is perceived as welcoming and supportive of their involvement, and less likely to be engaged where the principal is perceived as inaccessible, dismissive, or disinterested in supporting their involvement (Barr & Saltmarsh, 2014). Parent engagement agents can be pivotal in communicating strategies to school administrators that improve school climate through quality programs.

Methods

Data Collection and Analyses

- The targeted population was 18 HISD elementary, middle, and high schools (Appendix B). Schools were selected by HISD administrators based on historically low academic achievement.
- A website was developed, using the HISD HUB, to capture the number of minutes that PERs conducted activities that were aligned to strategies designated by the U.S. Department of Education's Title I Parent Involvement grant and the *Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family-School Partnerships*. The activities were documented in minutes and converted to hours, in some cases, in this evaluation for discussion. The information was captured through a survey link in the HUB and transmitted to Microsoft Excel Office 365.
- PERs activities were categorized as ((1) *Administrative activities*, (2) *Professional Development*, (3) *Parent Education/Training Events*, (4) *Parent Literacy Events*, (5) *Family Literacy Events*, (6) *Planning*, (7) *Volunteer*, and (8) *School Climate Improvement*. (See Appendix C, pp. 20–23, for list of activities.)
- Sixty-seven percent of PERs schools received a TEA accountability rating of Improvement Required (IR) in 2015 and 50% received an IR rating in 2016. Schools were rated using a framework of four indices that measures the quality of learning from different perspectives. Index 1 provides a snapshot of student performance across all subjects, Index 2 measures year-to-year student improvement, Index 3 emphasizes the academic achievement of certain student groups, and Index 4 emphasizes the importance of a high school diploma for success in postsecondary life. Schools receive a met standards rating if they meet Index 1 or Index 2 and Index 3 and Index 4. Otherwise, they receive an IR rating (TEA, n.d.). Several PERs schools were also designated by TEA as 2015–2016 “priority schools,” which are Title I high schools with graduation rates of less than 60% and/or schools with the lowest achievement on reading/math system safeguards at the “All Student” level. Some schools were designated as “Focus” schools, which are Title I schools ranked by the widest gaps between reading/math performance of the federal student groups and safeguard targets of 75 percent.
- Student enrollment and demographic characteristics were obtained from the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) for PERs schools for the 2016–2017 academic year (Appendix B, p. 19).
- Academic achievement data were obtained from STAAR data files (June 15, 2017). Only English reading and mathematics performance was assessed, considering the preponderance of research that links performance in these areas to student success (Espin & Deno, 1993; Duncan et al., 2007; Balfanz, Herzog, & Mac Iver, 2007; Kena, et al., 2016). Algebra I and English I End-of-Course exam results were also used to measure academic achievement at the secondary level in this evaluation.
- Paired t-tests were conducted for students at PERs schools with both 2016 and 2017 data on the first administration of reading and math STAAR. The results of only students whose test scores reflected progression to the next grade in 2017 were used in the analyses. The level of statistical significance was $p < .05$, two-tailed test.
- Effect size analyses, based on Cohen's d , were conducted using STAAR scale score results. Interpretation of Cohen's d is: $.2$ = small effect, $.5$ = medium effect, and $.8$ = large effect (Cohen, 1988). According to the *What Works Clearinghouse* (2008), effect sizes of 0.25 standard deviations or larger are considered to be substantively important. Effect sizes at least this large are interpreted as a qualified

positive (or negative) effect, even though they may not reach statistical significance in a given study.

- Student attendance data included excused, unexcused, and total absences for the 2015–2016 (pretest) and the 2016–2017 (posttest) academic years, captured from the Cognos database, June 19, 2017.

Results

What were the demographic characteristics of students at PERs schools during the 2016–2017 academic year?

A profile of students at PERs schools is presented in Appendix B.

- A total of 14,994 students were impacted by PERs during the 2016–2017 academic year (PEIMS, 2016–2017). PERs schools were 100% Title 1. Between 62 to 99% of students at the schools were economically disadvantaged and between 54 to 93% were at risk. In addition, 6 to 85% of students at PERs schools were identified as limited English proficient (LEP), 4 to 19% in special education programs, and 1 to 29% were gifted/talented (Appendix B, p. 19).

What extent were parent involvement activities offered at PERs schools?

The time that PERs spent conducting parent involvement activities was collected in the HISD HUB. A summary of the findings are depicted in **Figure 8a** (total hours) and **Figure 8b** (percent of time). Appendix C (pp. 20–23) provides a description of the types of activities in each category. Time was documented in minutes and converted to hours for discussion. Fall 2016 and spring 2017 data were disaggregated considering delays in hiring PERs at some schools in fall 2016.

- During the 2016–2017 academic year, PERs documented 3,669 hours conducting parent involvement activities, which reflected a substantial increase in documented time from the 2015–2016 academic year (1,468 hours, HISD Department of Research, 2016).
- Most of the time, during the 2016–2017 academic year, was spent on *Administrative* activities (127 hours in fall 2016 and 1,227 hours in spring 2017). *Administrative* activities included planning events

Figure 8a. Total hours, PERs activities, 2016–2017

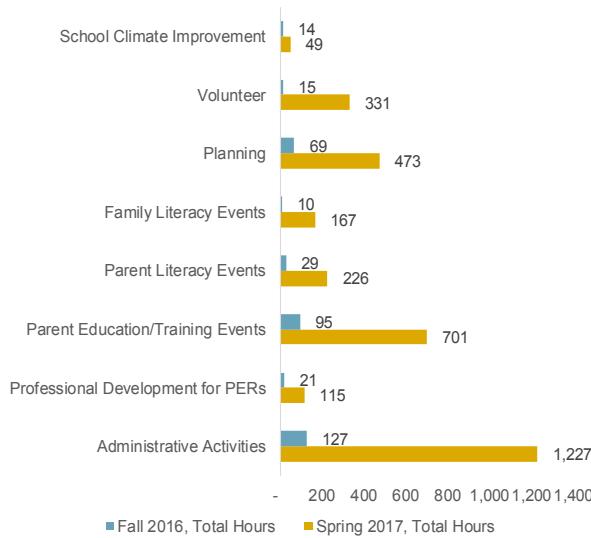


Figure 8b. Percent of time, PERs activities, 2016–2017

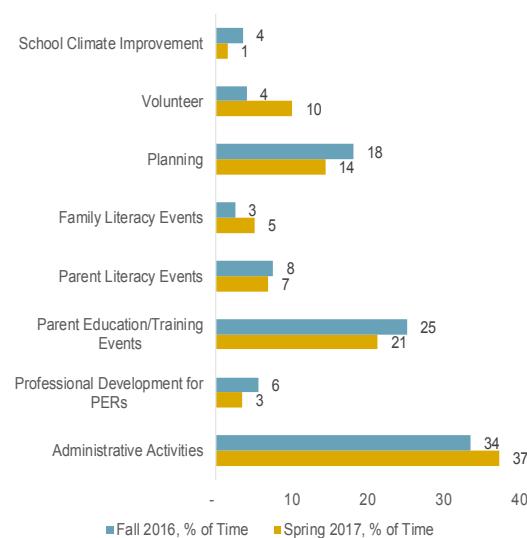
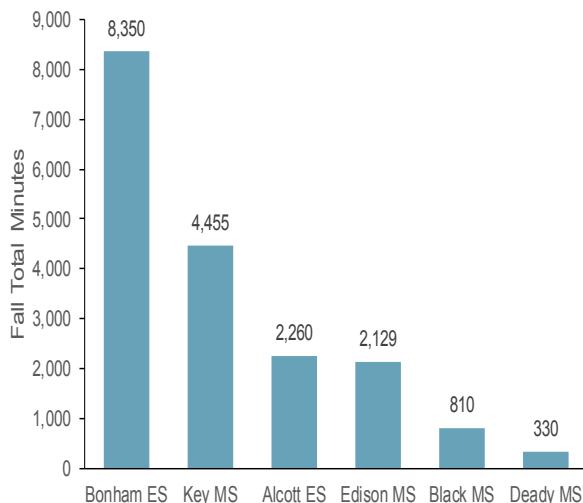
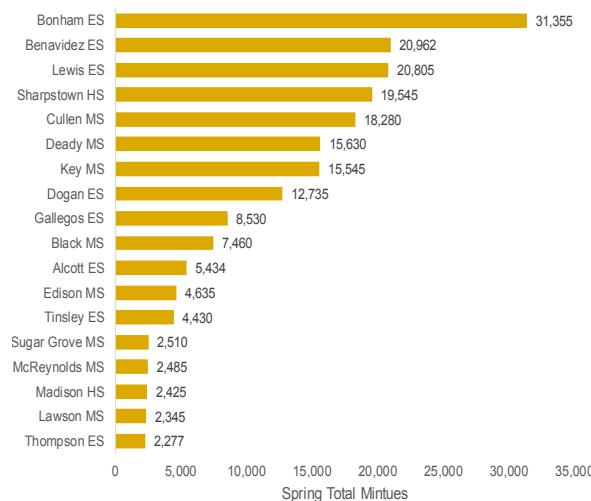
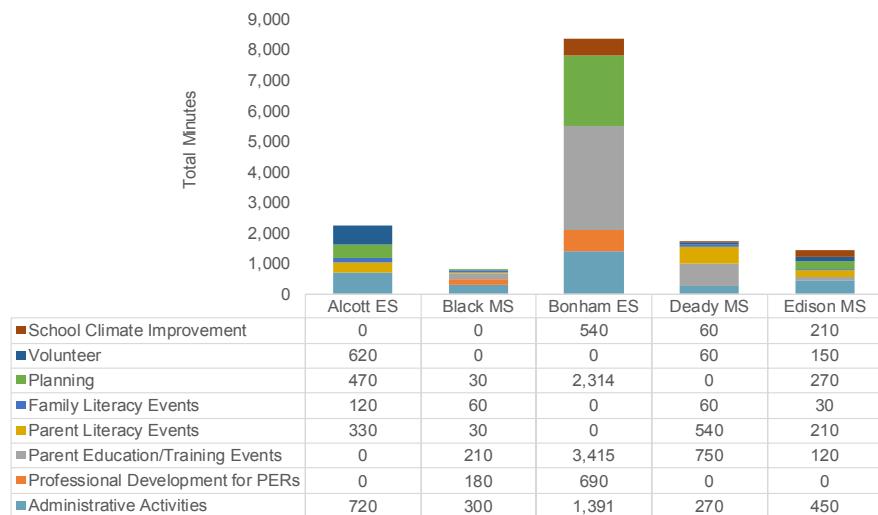
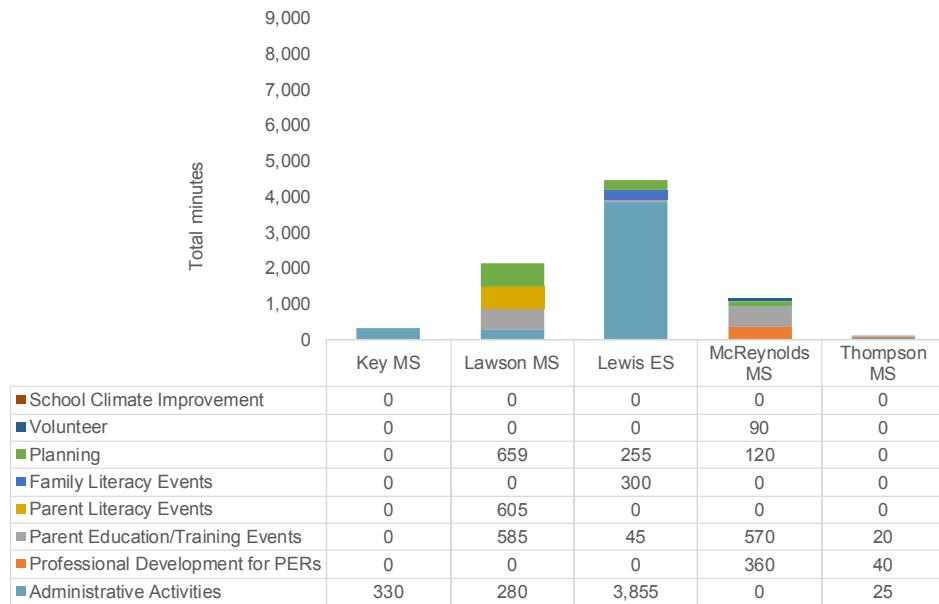


Figure 9a. Fall 2016 total PERs activity minutes by school**Figure 9b. Spring 2017 total PERs activity minutes by school**

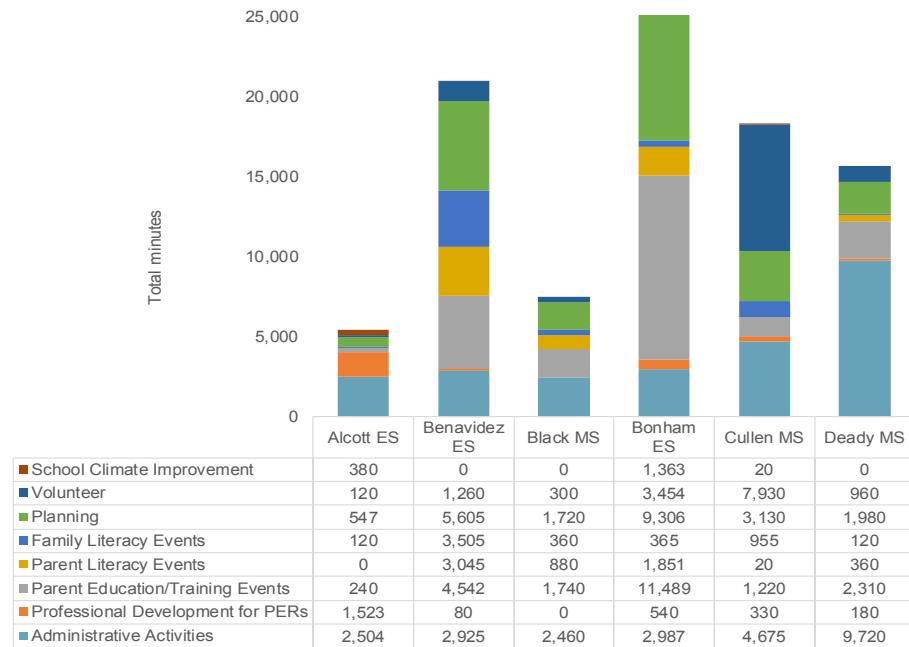
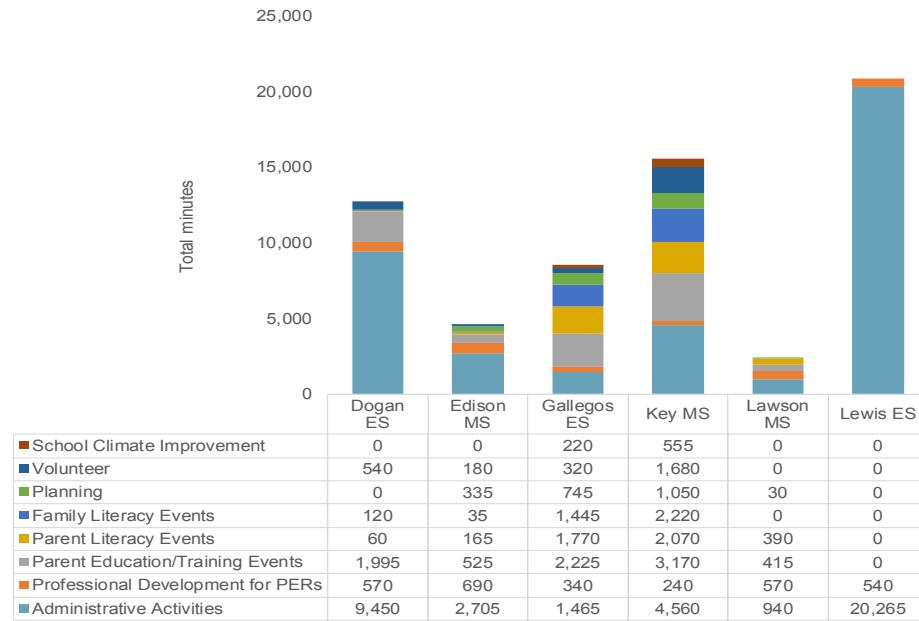
with principals, school leaders, and other staff along with documentation of school-related activities (Figure 8a). The least amount of time was spent conducting *School Climate Improvement* activities, such as surveys (14 hours in fall 2016 and 49 hours in spring 2017).

- Figure 8b reveals that PERs used between 21 to 25% of their time on *Parent Education/Training Events* in fall and spring, respectively. A larger percentage of their time was spent on *Volunteer* activities to recruit, train, maintain, and celebrate parent and community volunteers in spring 2017 compared to fall 2016 (10% vs. 4%).
- Figure 9a** presents the amount of time that PERs spent conducting parent involvement activities by school in fall 2016. The data for 6 of the 18 schools are included due to delays in the program implementation at the remaining schools.
- PERs activities were highest at Bonham Elementary School (8,350 minutes or 139 hours), followed by Key Middle School (4,455 minutes or 74 hours). In contrast, activities were conducted the least amount of time at Deady Middle School (330 minutes or 5.5 hours), followed by Black Middle School (810 minutes or 13.5 hours) (Figure 9a).
- Spring data on the total number of PERs activities can be found in **Figure 9b**. Again, PERs activities were highest at Bonham ES (31,355 minutes or 522.8 hours), then Benavidez (20,962 minutes or 349.4 hours). At the same time, PERs activities at Thompson occurred the least (2,277 minutes or 38.0 hours).
- PERs activity data were disaggregated by school and category to reflect which types of activities were more prevalent. Fall 2016 activities by school and category are presented in **Figures 10a** and **10b**. *Parent Education/Training Events* were the most prevalent activities at Bonham and Deady (Figure 10a) as well as McReynolds (Figure 10b) in fall 2016. While the most prevalent activities at Alcott, Black, and Edison (Figure 10a) along with Key and Lewis (Figure 10b) were *Administrative* activities.

Figure 10a. Fall 2016 time spent conducting PERs activities by school and category**Figure 10b. Fall 2016 time spent conducting PERs activities by school and category**

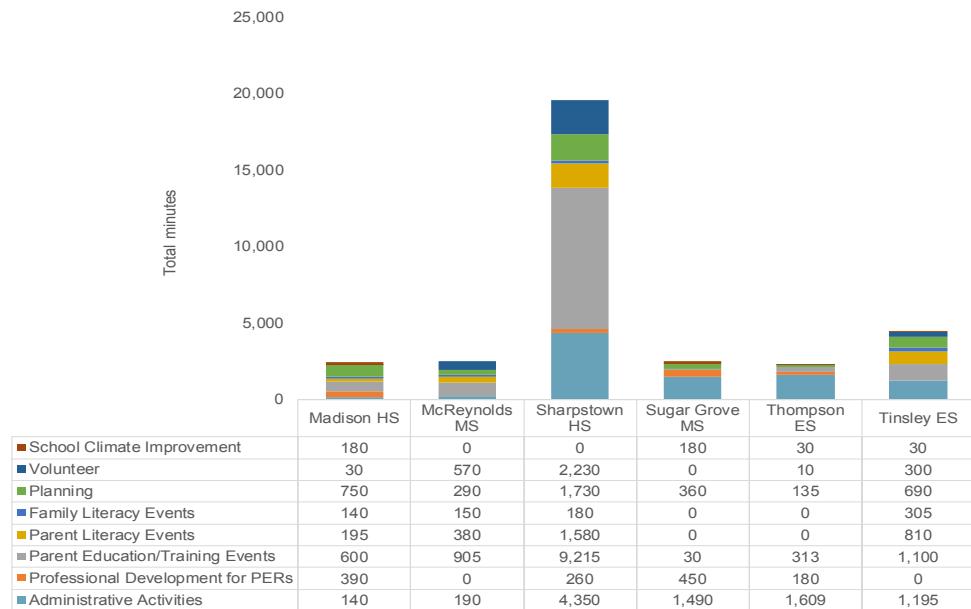
The PERs activities at Lawson were more likely to be related to *Planning*, while the PERs activities at Thompson were more likely to be related to *Professional Development* (Figure 10b).

- Spring 2017 PERs activities are depicted in **Figures 11a, 11b, and 11c**. Bonham documented the most minutes conducting *Parent Education/Training Events*. Alcott, Black, Deady, Dogan, Edison, Key, Lawson, Lewis, Sugar Grove, Thompson, and Tinsley documented the most minutes engaged in *Administrative* activities. At the same time, Benavidez and Madison documented the most time conducting *Planning* activities.

Figure 11a. Spring 2017 minutes spent conducting PERS activities by school and category**Figure 11b. Spring 2017 hours spent conducting PERS activities by school and category**

What was the impact of PERs on student academic achievement?

English reading and math STAAR were used to determine the impact of PERs on students' academic achievement. Specifically, paired t-test results of students at PERs schools with both 2016 and 2017 test data were used in the analyses. **Tables 2 and 3** in **Appendix E** (p. 26) depicts the results by grade level and test.

Figure 11c. Spring 2017 hours spent conducting PERS activities by school and category**Reading STAAR (Table 2, Appendix E, p. 26)**

- There were increases in the mean scale scores on the English reading STAAR for the paired samples of PERs students who were administered the test as fourth graders in 2017 and tested at the third grade-level in 2016 (**Figure 12**). In addition, there were increases in the scores of fifth, seventh, and eighth grade-students who were administered the test in 2017 and also tested at the preceding grade level in 2016. The positive differences in scores were highly statistically significant at $p < .0001$ (Table 2, Appendix E, p. 26).
- In contrast, there was a decrease in the mean reading scale score for sixth grade students who were administered the test in 2017 and tested as fifth graders in 2016. However, the difference was not statistically significant at $p < .05$ (Table 2, Appendix E, p. 26).

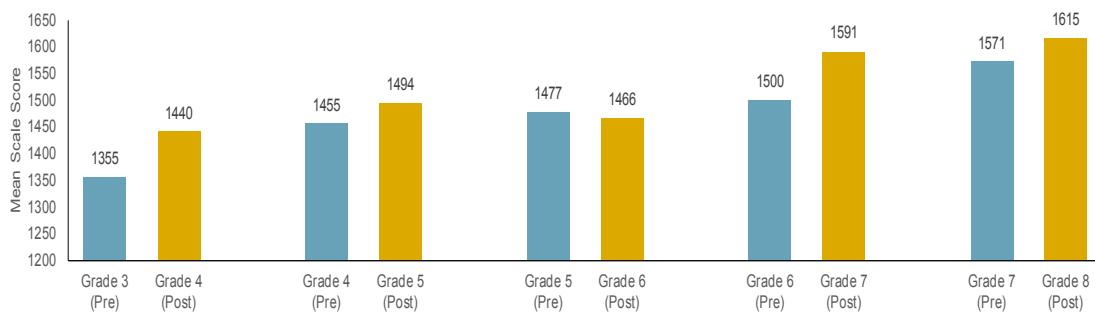
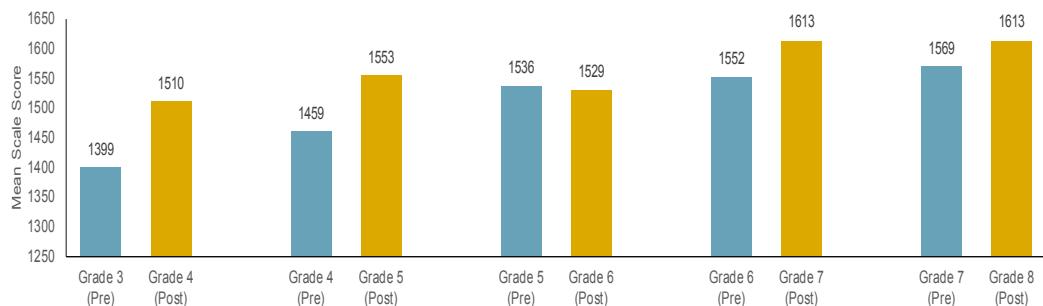
Figure 12. Reading STAAR paired t-test analyses, 2016 (pre) and 2017 (post)

Figure 13. Math STAAR paired t-test analyses, 2016 (pre) and 2017 (post)**Math STAAR (Table 3, Appendix E, p. 26)**

- There were increases in the mean scale scores on the English math STAAR for the paired samples of PERs students who were administered the test as fourth graders in 2017 and tested at the third grade-level in 2016 (**Figure 13**). There were also increases in the mean scale scores of fifth, seventh, and eighth grade-students who were administered the test in 2017 and also tested at the preceding grade level in 2016. The positive differences in mean scale scores were highly statistically significant at $p < .0001$ (Table 3, Appendix E, p. 26).
- In contrast, there was a decrease in the mean math scale score for sixth grade students who were administered the test in 2017 and tested as fifth graders in 2016. However, the difference was not statistically significant at $p < .05$ (Table 2, Appendix E, p. 26).

STAAR Reading and Math Effect Sizes

- Figure 14** depicts effect size analyses based on the 2016 (pre-test) and the 2017 (post-test) reading STAAR. There was a medium program effect as students progressed from third to fourth grade and a large effect as students progressed from sixth to seventh grade.

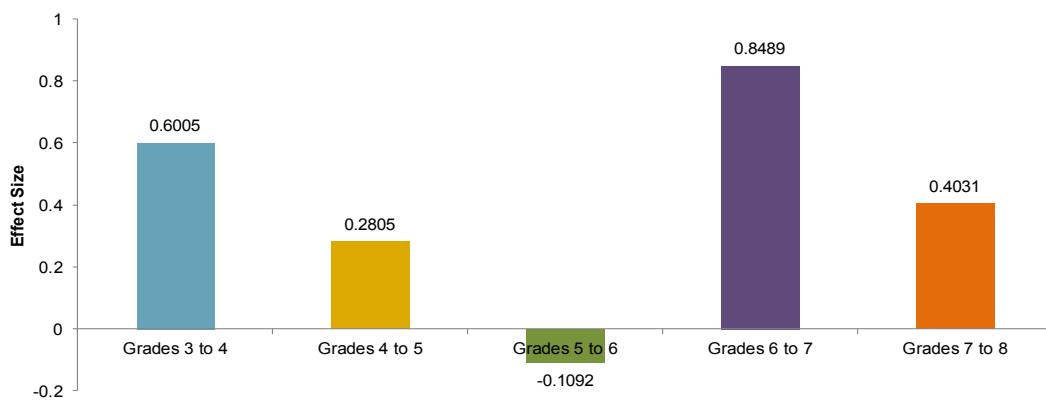
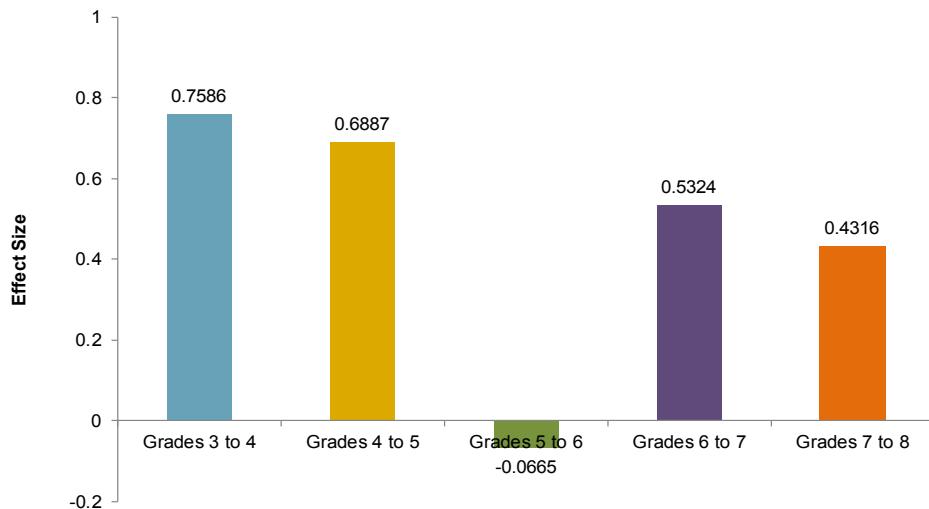
Figure 14. Reading STAAR effect sizes of PERs and comparison student groups (2016 vs. 2017 results)

Figure 15. Math STAAR effect sizes of PERs and Comparison student groups (2016 vs. 2017 results)

- Effect size analyses based on the 2016 (pre-test) and the 2017 (post-test) math STAAR can be found in **Figure 15**. There were medium to large program effects as students progressed from third to fourth grade and from fourth to fifth grades. There was a medium program effect as students progressed from sixth to seventh grade.

English I and Algebra I End-of-Course (EOC) Results

- Figure 16** depicts 2017 English I and Algebra I EOC results for PERs first-time testers. The 2017 district-level results for first-time testers are presented for comparison. The PERs-student group attained a lower mean scale score compared to the district on the 2017 English I EOC (3552 vs. 3905) and the Algebra I EOC (3829 vs. 4006).

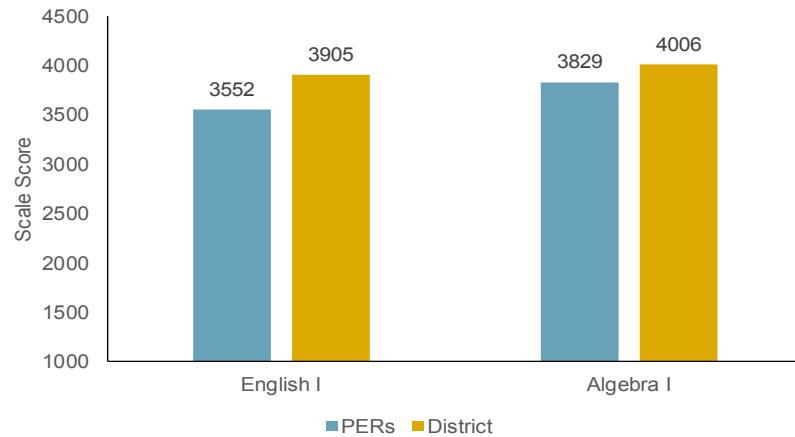
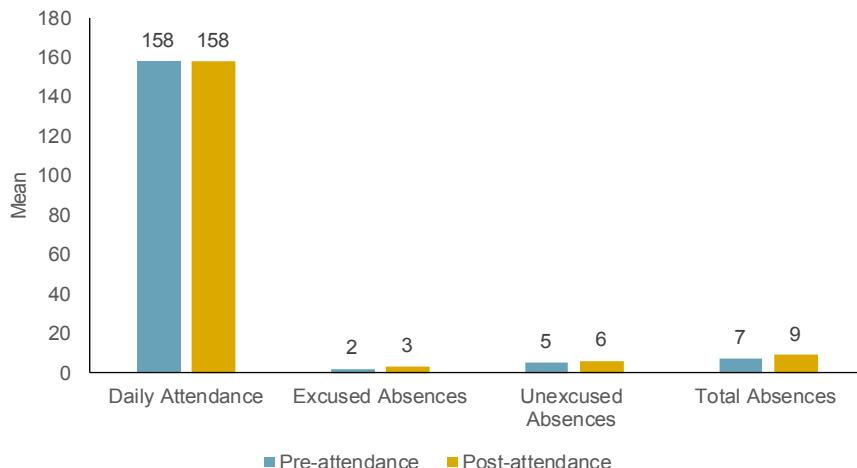
Figure 16. English I and Algebra I End-of-Course Results, First-time testers, 2017

Figure 17. Pre- and post attendance at PERs schools

What were the attendance outcomes for students at PERs schools?

Attendance outcomes during the 2015–2016 and 2016–2017 academic years provided pre- and post-measures for students at PERs schools. These measures were used to determine whether there were changes in attendance for students over time. The results are presented in **Figure 17**. More detailed analyses can be found in **Appendix F**, p. 27.

- The mean number of days in attendance for students at PERs schools remained stable from 2015–2016 to 2016–2017 (mean = 158).
- Attendance analyses also showed an increase in the mean number of excused (2 vs. 3), unexcused (5 vs. 6), and total absences (7 vs. 9) for students in PERs schools from 2015–2016 to 2016–2017.

Discussion

The PERs program was designed to enhance the school experience of parents and students, thus, improving the educational outcomes for children and youth whose parents were involved in the program. Based on SEDL's *Dual-Capacity Building Framework for Family-School Partnerships*, PERs sought to cultivate and maintain positive relationships between schools and families. PERs operated in 18 HISD elementary, middle, and high schools during the 2016–2017 academic year compared to 20 schools during the 2015–2016 academic year. PERs schools were selected by HISD FACE administrators. Historically, the majority of students impacted by PERs experienced low academic achievement, were Title 1, economically disadvantaged, and at risk of dropping out of school.

PERs' responsibilities focused on (1) *Administrative* activities, (2) *Professional Development*, (3) *Parent Education/Training Events*, (4) *Parent Literacy Events*, (5) *Family Literacy Events*, (6) *Planning*, (7) *Volunteer*, and (8) *School Climate Improvement*. During the 2016–2017 academic year, PERs documented 3,669 hours conducting parent involvement activities, which was a substantial increase in documented time from the 2015–2016 academic year of 1,468 hours. While the extent that activities were conducted at targeted campuses varied extensively, consistent monitoring of PERs contacts may have helped to increase program delivery across targeted campuses.

PERs impact on students' academic performance was measured using reading and math STAAR as well as English I and Algebra I EOC exams, given that student success has been linked to these areas.

Paired t-test analyses revealed increases in the mean scale scores on the English reading and math STAAR for PERs students who were administered the test as fourth graders in 2017 and tested at the third grade-level in 2016. Further, there were increases in the scores of fifth, seventh, and eighth grade-students who were administered the English reading and math STAAR in 2017 and also tested at the preceding grade level in 2016. Effect size analyses based on the 2016 (pre-test) and the 2017 (post-test) reading STAAR revealed a medium program effect as students progressed from third to fourth grade and a large program effect as students progressed from sixth to seventh grade. Effect size analyses based on the 2016 (pre-test) and the 2017 (post-test) math STAAR revealed medium to large program effects as students progressed from third to fourth grade and from fourth to fifth grades. There was a medium program effect as students progressed from sixth to seventh grade on the math STAAR.

School attendance analyses showed that the mean number of days in attendance for students at PERs schools remained stable from 2015–2016 to 2016–2017. While there was an increase in the mean number of excused absences, there was also an increase in the mean number of unexcused and total absences for students in PERs schools from 2015–2016 to 2016–2017.

There were several limitations to this study, including the use of student achievement and attendance outcomes as proxies to measure the impact of PERs' at targeted schools. However, the expectation that parent involvement is associated with student achievement is well-supported in the research. Another limitation was that schools may have differed in how they utilized PERs services, considering the differences in parent and student characteristics and needs. In spite of these limitations, this evaluation reflected that PERs have promise toward increasing parental involvement through implementation of evidence-based activities and strategies. Continued monitoring of the program may reveal additional trends regarding PERs impact on student outcomes.

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Appendix A

The Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family–School Partnerships



Reprinted from Mapp, K. L., & Kuttner, P. J. (2013). *Partners in education: A dual capacity-building framework for family–school partnerships*. Austin, TX: SEDL

Appendix B
PERs Schools Profile

| PERs Schools Profile, 2016-2017 | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------|------------|----------------------|---------------------|---------------------|----------------|-----------|-------|-----------|-------|--|
| | Number of Years with a PER | Enrollment | 2016 Priority/ Focus | 2015 Accountability | 2016 Accountability | % Eco. Disadv. | % At Risk | % LEP | % Sp. Ed. | % G/T | |
| Alcott ES | 1 | 291 | Priority | IR | Met | 96 | 72 | 22 | 10 | 2 | |
| Benavidez ES | 1 | 1,099 | | Met | Met | 99 | 93 | 85 | 5 | 3 | |
| Black MS | 2 | 1,019 | Focus | Met | Met | 62 | 54 | 12 | 10 | 29 | |
| Bonham ES | 1 | 1,064 | | Met | IR | 98 | 84 | 65 | 3 | 7 | |
| Cullen MS | 2 | 491 | | IR | IR | 76 | 85 | 10 | 19 | 1 | |
| Deady MS | 2 | 690 | Focus | IR | Met | 98 | 81 | 36 | 11 | 8 | |
| Dogan ES | 1 | 641 | Priority | IR | IR | 86 | 64 | 41 | 6 | 7 | |
| Edison MS | 1 | 656 | Focus | IR | IR | 95 | 83 | 33 | 14 | 10 | |
| Gallegos ES | 1 | 416 | | Met | IR | 96 | 76 | 51 | 10 | 17 | |
| Key MS | 2 | 733 | | IR | IR | 75 | 87 | 20 | 16 | 2 | |
| Lawson MS (formerly Dowling MS) | 1 | 1,036 | | IR | IR | 81 | 83 | 30 | 14 | 5 | |
| Lewis ES | 1 | 842 | Focus | IR | IR | 77 | 77 | 57 | 6 | 13 | |
| Madison HS | 1 | 1,769 | | Met | IR | 75 | 88 | 16 | 13 | 6 | |
| McReynolds MS | 2 | 621 | | IR | Met | 93 | 79 | 24 | 18 | 5 | |
| Sharpstown HS | 2 | 1,604 | Focus | Met | Met | 94 | 88 | 37 | 9 | 4 | |
| Sugar Grove Academy | 2 | 767 | Priority | IR | Met | 86 | 86 | 51 | 11 | 6 | |
| Thompson ES | 2 | 462 | Priority | IR | Met | 96 | 74 | 6 | 8 | 3 | |
| Tinsley ES | 2 | 793 | | IR | Met | 97 | 83 | 70 | 4 | 15 | |

Appendix C

PERs Activities

Administrative Activities

School Leadership - Met with Principal and/or the designated school FACE contact to discuss planning, tasks and activities
 Planning - Reviewed campus Faculty Handbook
 Planning - Reviewed School Improvement Plan
 Planning - Reviewed campus calendar for parent events
 Planning - Created a parent contact log for faculty and staff to record their contacts with parents or reviewed the one that the school uses
 Reporting - Reporting activities and tasks to FACE team
 Compensation - Prepare time sheets and mileage
 Other - Other administrative activity

Professional Development for PER

Professional Development - Attend a training specifically designed for the PERs
 Professional Development - Individual book study
 Professional Development - Attend a school-wide training
 Professional Development - Attend a district-wide training
 Professional Development - Attend a conference

Parent Education/Training Events

Planning - Reviewed Campus calendar for parent education events
 Planning - Met with Principal and/or the designated school FACE contact to discuss planning, tasks and activities
 Planning - Met with Parents to discuss parent education event planning, tasks and activities
 Planning - Met with Teachers and Paraprofessionals to discuss parent education event planning, tasks and activities
 Planning - Reviewed Community Resource Guide for community organizations that can assist with parent education event
 Planning - Recruited an parent education event organizing team
 Planning - Create materials for parent education event including sign in sheets, evaluations, and agendas
 Planning - Create instructional materials for parent education event such as instructional sheets, manipulatives, etc.
 Planning - Assemble materials and tools for parent education events (such as setting tables with supplies, setting up chairs, posting signs, etc.)
 Planning - Other planning activity for parent education/training event
 Participation - Created invitation flyer for parents for parent education event
 Participation - Created automated phone call to go home to parents regarding parent education event
 Participation - Distributed of written materials to parents regarding parent education events
 Participation - Created other invitation materials (such as sticky labels to put on students' shirts or signage) for parent education event
 Participation - Organized phone tree to make live calls to parents and families regarding parent education event
 Participation - Made direct live phone calls to parents and families regarding parent education event
 Participation - Other activity designed to encourage participation in parent education event
 Event - Participated in the actual parent education/training event
 Event - Other activity related to participation in the actual parent education/training event
 Post-Event - Analyzed results of evaluation forms regarding parent literacy event
 Post-Event - Reported results of evaluation forms regarding parent literacy event to school leadership, teachers, parents or other groups
 Post-Event - Turn in sign in sheets related to parent literacy event to Title I Coordinator to be sure that participation is recorded in Chancery
 Post-Event - Other activity related to the post-parent literacy event

Appendix C (cont'd) PERs Activities

Parent Literacy Events

Planning -Reviewed campus calendar for parent literacy events
 Planning - Met with Principal and/or the designated school FACE contact to discuss planning, tasks and activities
 Planning - Met with Parents to discuss parent literacy event planning, tasks and activities
 Planning - Met with Teachers and Paraprofessionals to discuss parent literacy event planning, tasks and activities
 Planning - Reviewed Community Resource Guide for community organizations that can assist with parent literacy event
 Planning - Recruited a parent literacy event organizing team
 Planning - Create materials for parent literacy event including sign in sheets, evaluations, and agendas
 Planning - Create instructional materials for parent literacy event such as instructional sheets, manipulatives, etc.
 Planning - Assemble materials and tools for parent literacy events (such as setting tables with supplies, setting up chairs, posting signs, etc.
 Planning - Other planning activity for parent literacy event

Participation - Created invitation flyer for parents
 Participation - Created automated phone call to go home to parents
 Participation - Distributed of written materials to parents regarding literacy events
 Participation - Created other invitation materials (such as sticky labels to put on students' shirts or signage)
 Participation - Organized phone tree to make live calls to parents and families regarding event
 Participation - Made direct live phone calls to parents and families regarding event
 Participation - Other activity designed to encourage participation in literacy event
 Participation - Other activity designed to encourage participation

Event - Participated in the actual parent literacy event
 Event - Other activity related to participation in the actual parent literacy event

Post-Event - Analyzed results of evaluation forms regarding parent literacy event
 Post-Event - Reported results of evaluation forms regarding parent literacy event to school leadership, teachers, parents or other groups
 Post-Event - Turn in sign in sheets related to parent literacy event to Title I Coordinator to be sure that participation is recorded in Chancery
 Post-Event - Other activity related to the post-parent literacy event

Family Literacy Events

Planning -Reviewed campus calendar for family literacy events
 Planning - Met with Principal and/or the designated school FACE contact to discuss planning, tasks and activities
 Planning - Met with Parents to discuss family literacy event planning, tasks and activities
 Planning - Met with Teachers and Paraprofessionals to discuss family literacy event planning, tasks and activities
 Planning - Reviewed Community Resource Guide for community organizations that can assist with parent event
 Planning - Recruited a family literacy event organizing team
 Planning - Create materials for family literacy event including sign in sheets, evaluations, and agendas
 Planning - Create instructional materials for family literacy event such as instructional sheets, manipulatives, etc.
 Planning - Assemble materials and tools for family literacy events (such as setting tables with supplies, setting up chairs, posting signs, etc.
 Planning - Other planning activity for family literacy event

Participation - Created invitation flyer for parents regarding family literacy event
 Participation - Created automated phone call to go home to parents regarding family literacy event
 Participation - Distributed of written materials to parents regarding family literacy events
 Participation - Created other invitation materials (such as sticky labels to put on students' shirts or signage)
 Participation - Organized phone tree to make live calls to parents and families regarding family literacy event
 Participation - Made direct live phone calls to parents and families regarding family literacy event
 Participation - Other activity designed to encourage participation in family literacy event

Event - Participated in the actual family literacy event
 Other activity related to participation in the actual family literacy event
 Analyzed results of evaluation forms of family literacy event
 Post-Event - Reported results of evaluation forms regarding family literacy event to school leadership, teachers, parents or other groups
 Post-Event - Turn in sign in sheets to Title I Coordinator to be sure that participation is recorded in Chancery
 Post-Event - Other activity related to the post-event

Appendix C (cont'd) PERs Activities

Planning

Planning -Reviewed campus calendar for opportunities for parents and community to help plan parent involvement activities as well as collecting parent input regarding expenditures of Title I funds with school leadership and teacher
 Planning - Met with Principal and/or the designated school FACE contact to discuss planning of parent involvement activities as well as collecting parent input regarding expenditures of Title I funds
 Planning - Met with Parents and/or the designated school FACE contact to discuss planning of parent involvement activities as well as collecting parent input regarding expenditures of Title I funds
 Planning - Met with Teachers and Paraprofessionals to discuss planning of parent involvement activities as well as collecting parent input regarding expenditures of Title I funds
 Planning - Reviewed Community Resource Guide for community organizations that can assist with planning of parent involvement activities as well as helping to collect parent input regarding expenditures of Title I funds
 Planning - Recruited a family engagement organizing or Action Team to help plan parent involvement activities as well as helping to collect parent input regarding expenditures of Title I funds
 Planning - Create materials for to collect parent and community input on planning parent involvement activities as well as collecting parent input regarding expenditures of Title I funds
 Planning - Other activity that is related to planning parent involvement activities as well as collecting parent input regarding expenditures of Title I funds

Participation - Created automated phone call to go home to parents regarding related to planning parent involvement activities as well as collecting parent input regarding expenditures of Title I funds
 Participation - Distributed of written materials to parents related to planning parent involvement activities as well as collecting parent input regarding expenditures of Title I funds
 Participation - Created other invitation materials related to planning parent involvement activities as well as collecting parent input regarding expenditures of Title I funds. (such as sticky labels to put on students' shirts or signage)
 Participation - Organized phone tree to make live calls to parents and families related to planning parent involvement activities as well as collecting parent input regarding expenditures of Title I funds
 Participation - Made direct live phone calls to parents and families related to planning parent involvement activities as well as collecting parent input regarding expenditures of Title I funds
 Participation - Other activity designed to encourage participation related to planning parent involvement activities as well as collecting parent input regarding expenditures of Title I funds

Event - Participated in the actual family event related to planning parent involvement activities as well as collecting parent input regarding expenditures of Title I funds
 Event - Other activity related to participation in the event designed for planning parent involvement activities as well as collecting parent input regarding expenditures of Title I funds

Post-Event - Analyzed results of evaluation forms related to planning parent involvement activities as well as collecting parent input regarding expenditures of Title I funds
 Post-Event - Turn in sign in sheets to Title I Coordinator to be sure that participation related to planning parent involvement activities as well as collecting parent input regarding expenditures of Title I funds. is recorded in Chancery
 Post-Event - Other activity related to the post-event related to planning parent involvement activities as well as collecting parent input regarding expenditures of Title I funds

Appendix C (cont'd) PERs Activities

Volunteer

Planning -Reviewed campus calendar for opportunities for parents and community to volunteer, as well as to help recruit, train, maintain and celebrate parent and community volunteers

Planning - Met with Principal and/or the designated school FACE contact to recruit, train, maintain and celebrate parent and community volunteers

Planning - Met with Parents and/or the designated school FACE contact to recruit, train, maintain and celebrate parent and community volunteers

Planning - Met with Teachers and Paraprofessionals to recruit, train, maintain and celebrate parent and community volunteers

School Climate Improvement

Action Team - Assembled school Action Team to plan and review FACE efforts at the school

Action Team - Planned school Action Team meeting to plan and review FACE efforts at the school

Action Team - Participated in school Action Team meeting to plan and review FACE efforts at the school

Action Team - Collected evaluations school Action Team meeting to plan and review FACE efforts at the school

School Climate Survey - Created or identify an existing school climate survey

School Climate Survey - Made copies or decide on other type of distribution of school climate survey

School Climate Survey - Distributed school climate survey

School Climate Survey - Recorded results of school climate survey

School Climate Survey - Reported results of school climate survey to school leadership, faculty, staff and others

School Climate Survey - Convened Action Team and/or others to discuss results of school climate survey and plan recommendations to principal

Appendix D
Training Agenda

HISD | Family and Community Engagement
EMPOWERING FAMILIES. ADVANCING LEARNING.

2016 2017 FACE Parent Engagement Representative
 Professional Development
 November 16, 2016
 Vara Center, 1102 Telephone, Houston, Texas 77023
 Room 146
 1 pm – 4 pm

| | | |
|---------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|
| 1:00 pm | Welcome | Dr. Arredondo |
| 1:08 pm | Annual Program Evaluation of 2015 2016 FACE PER Pgm <i>Significant Findings</i> | Ms. Pleasant |
| 1:20 pm | Annual Program Evaluation of 2016 2017 FACE PER Program <i>Task and Activities Categories</i> <i>Instructions on Inputting Tasks</i> | Ms. Pleasant |
| 1:40 pm | Title I, Part A Report and PERs School Results 15-16 <i>Excerpts of Title I, Part A Report</i> | Dr. Cocina |
| 2:00 pm | Break | |
| 3:00 pm | Family Friendly Schools: Creating an Action Team Family Friendly Schools: School Walk-Through <i>Family Friendly Schools Manual</i> | |
| 3:30 pm | More Practical Strategies for Enhancing Parent Engagement from <i>Beyond the Bake Sale</i> | Ms. Pleasant |
| 3:50 pm | Discussion, Questions | Dr. Cocina |
| 04:00 | Evaluations and Conclusion <i>Evaluations</i> | Dr. Cocina |

**Appendix D (cont'd)
Training Agenda**

| | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|
| 2016 2017 FACE PERS Training for Fall Hires and for those that missed PERs Training in the Fall | | |
| Friday, January 27, 2017 | | |
| 9 am - 12 noon | | |
| Location TBA | | |
| 00:00 | Welcome | Mr. Flores |
| 00:15 | Introductions/Icebreaker | Mr. Flores |
| 00:30 | FACE PERs Program, Origin and Fundamentals | Dr. Cocina |
| 00:45 | Staff Handbook and Administrative Concerns: Mileage, Time Sheets and More | Mrs. Martinez Resa |
| 01:05 | FACE Fundamentals | Ms. Tilahun |
| 01:45 | Break | |
| 01:50 | Family Friendly Schools | Ms. Chavera |
| 02:30 | Program Evaluation of PERs Program and Tracking Activities | Ms. Pleasant |
| 02:55 | Discussion, Questions | Mr. Flores |
| 03:00 | Evaluations and Conclusion | Mr. Flores |

Appendix E
PERs and Comparison Group STAAR Paired T-test Analyses

| Table 2. STAAR Reading Results, PERs Student Sample vs. Comparison Student Sample, 2016-2017 | | | | | | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|---------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|----------|
| Student Samples | n | 2016 Pre-test Scale Score | 2016 Pre-test Std. Devia. | 2017 Post-test Scale Score | 2017 Post-test Std. Devia. | 2017-2016 Mean Difference | t |
| | | Grade 3 | | Grade 4 | | | |
| PERS | 422 | 1355.27 | 137.842 | 1440.02 | 144.318 | 84.74 | 20.19*** |
| | | Grade 4 | | Grade 5 | | | |
| PERS | 349 | 1455.05 | 125.130 | 1493.81 | 150.073 | 26.19 | 7.99*** |
| | | Grade 5 | | Grade 6 | | | |
| PERS | 167 | 1477.27 | 99.740 | 1466.33 | 100.575 | -10.94 | -1.83 |
| | | Grade 6 | | Grade 7 | | | |
| PERS | 187 | 1500.06 | 101.976 | 1590.70 | 111.357 | 90.63 | 15.93*** |
| | | Grade 7 | | Grade 8 | | | |
| PERS | 117 | 1571.10 | 109.214 | 1615.31 | 110.146 | 44.21 | 7.948*** |

| Table 3. STAAR Math Results, PERs Student Sample vs. Comparison Student Sample, 2016-2017 | | | | | | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|---------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|-----------|
| Student Samples | n | 2016 Pre-test Scale Score | 2016 Pre-test Std. Devia. | 2017 Post-test Scale Score | 2017 Post-test Std. Devia. | 2017-2016 Mean Difference | t |
| | | Grade 3 | | Grade 4 | | | |
| PERS | 473 | 1399.27 | 140.260 | 1509.50 | 150.168 | 110.24 | 23.88*** |
| | | Grade 4 | | Grade 5 | | | |
| PERS | 353 | 1458.76 | 130.239 | 1553.25 | 143.833 | 94.48 | 20.986*** |
| | | Grade 5 | | Grade 6 | | | |
| PERS | 165 | 1535.63 | 101.511 | 1529.18 | 92.321 | -6.45 | -1.039 |
| | | Grade 6 | | Grade 7 | | | |
| PERS | 186 | 1552.15 | 106.205 | 1612.64 | 120.563 | 60.50 | 11.66*** |
| | | Grade 7 | | Grade 8 | | | |
| PERS | 98 | 1568.57 | 87.550 | 1613.39 | 117.890 | 44.82 | 4.783*** |

Appendix F
PERs and Comparison Group Attendance Results

Table 4: Pre- and Post Attendance Results, PERS Schools, 2015-2016 and 2016-2017

| | | PERs Schools | | |
|-----------|------------------------------|--------------|--------|--------|
| | | n | Mean | Std. |
| 2015-2016 | Daily Attendance Event Count | 12451 | 157.56 | 38.119 |
| | Excused Absences Count | 12451 | 2.34 | 4.124 |
| | Unexcused Absences Count | 12451 | 5.08 | 7.166 |
| | Total Absences Count | 12451 | 7.42 | 9.083 |
| 2016-2017 | Daily Attendance Event Count | 15024 | 157.85 | 37.518 |
| | Excused Absences Count | 15024 | 2.71 | 4.565 |
| | Unexcused Absences Count | 15024 | 6.02 | 8.724 |
| | Total Absences Count | 15024 | 8.73 | 10.695 |